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THE MILITANT

A SOCIALIST NEWSWEEKLY PUBLISHED IN THE INTERESTS OF WORKING PEOPLE

VOL. 71/NO. 33 SEPTEMBER 10, 2007

INSIDE

The lessons and example of Co-Op miners' fight for union

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Court hears appeal in case of Cuban Five

BY CHERYL GOERTZ AND SAM MANUEL

ATLANTA—Attorneys for five Cuban revolutionaries being held in U.S. prisons argued at a federal appeals hearing that the convictions of the five men should be thrown out because of misconduct by the prosecutors and insufficient evidence for the charges of "conspiracy" to commit espionage and murder. They also argued that the sentences, which range from 15 years to life in prison, were unusually harsh given the weakness of the evidence.

The courtroom was packed with supporters of the five.

Antonio Guerrero, Gerardo Hernández, Ramón Labañino, Fernando González, and René González have been locked up in U.S. prisons since 1998. A federal court convicted and sentenced them on frame-up charges in a 2001 trial in Miami. The five were in this country monitoring counter-revolutionary Cuban-American groups in Florida that have carried out violent attacks in Cuba with complicity of the U.S. government.

In August 2005 a three-judge panel of the 11th U.S. Circuit Court of Appeals in Atlanta threw out the convictions on

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L.A. march: 'No to raids, deportations!'

BY CHRIS REMPLE

LOS ANGELES, August 25—About 2,000 people marched today through downtown here calling for legalization of undocumented immigrants and an end to raids and deportations by the immigration police.

Protesters also demanded that U.S. authorities allow the return of Elvira Arellano, a former airplane cleaner at Chicago's O'Hare Airport, who was arrested here and deported to Mexico August 19. Since her arrest in a workplace raid in 2002, Arellano publicly fought the government's effort to deport her. For the past year she stayed at Adalberto United Methodist Church in Chicago, where she claimed sanctuary.

At an August 20 press conference at the federal building here, Angelica Salas, executive director of the Coalition for Humane Immigrant Rights of Los Angeles, called the march. Two days later a broad spectrum of immigrant rights groups held a press conference to announce the formation of the coalition Somos Todos Elvira y Saulito Arellano—We Are All Elvira and Saúl Arellano (her

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Utah mine is closed for 'safety concerns'

Miners angry at layoffs, bosses' deadly profit drive

Militant/Chris Hoeppner

August 25 fund-raiser in Helper, Utah, for families of six miners trapped in mine collapse.

BY ALYSON KENNEDY

HUNTINGTON, Utah, August 27—In the wake of the deadly mine collapses at the Crandall Canyon mine, which have trapped six miners underground and killed three men, Murray Energy Corp. has said that another one of its Utah mines, the Tower mine, will be temporarily closed due to safety concerns. Company president Robert Murray announced August 26 that at least 170 miners will be laid off from the Tower and West Ridge mines in Carbon County, Utah.

Murray offered the workers jobs in mines his company owns in Galatia, Illinois, and St. Clairsville, Ohio. He said they would be housed in a bunkhouse, work three weeks straight, and only then get a week off to visit their families in Utah.

"This is a bad deal," Jeremy Bailey, 31, a miner who was just laid off from the West Ridge mine, told the *Militant.* "Who can really do that? I have a family and I am not going to leave them. There is not much time to decide." Workers

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Held 3 1/2 years with no charges, Padilla is convicted of 'conspiracy'

BY DEBORAH LIATOS

MIAMI—A federal jury here found José Padilla guilty August 16 of "terrorism" conspiracy charges after 11 hours of deliberation. He was convicted, along with Adham Hassoun and Kifah Jayyousi, of conspiracy to murder in a foreign country. They will be sentenced December 5, and face up to life in prison.

Federal prosecutors based their case against Padilla, part of the U.S. government's "war on terrorism," primarily on what they said was an application form to attend an al-Qaeda training camp in Afghanistan in 2000. They never presented proof that he was at the camp.

José Padilla, a U.S. citizen, was arrested in May 2002 at Chicago's O'Hare International Airport as he arrived from Pakistan. U.S. officials claimed he was an al-Qaeda agent plotting to set off a radioactive "dirty bomb" in the United States. Two days before a judge was to hear a challenge to his imprisonment without charges, the Bush administration declared him an "enemy combatant" and transferred him to a Navy prison in South Carolina. U.S. officials insisted that as "enemy combatant" they could hold him indefinitely.

Padilla was held there in a small isolation cell for three and a half years, without charges and without access to his family or to his attorneys—even when he was being questioned. When he left that cell he was blindfolded and his ears covered. The government denied he was ever mistreated.

After the Supreme Court considered taking up his case to decide whether indefinite imprisonment of a U.S. citizen violates the Constitution, U.S. officials transferred him from military custody to a federal prison in Miami and decided to give him a civilian trial.

Washington never pursued the "dirty bomb" accusation. It was so flimsy it was not mentioned during Padilla's three-month trial.

In addition to the "application form," the case on Padilla rested largely on a July 1997 phone call between Padilla and Hassoun taped by the FBI. On the witness stand, FBI agent John Kavanaugh asserted that when Padilla said "it's gonna happen soon" and "over there" in that phone call, he meant that he was going overseas to "a jihad area" to fight.

On cross-examination, Padilla's attorney, Michael Caruso, who argued that his client went overseas solely to study Arabic and Islam, asked the FBI agent whether he ever heard Padilla discuss jihad training. Kavanaugh said no. Prosecutors said that when the other two defendants discussed "playing football" or "eating cheese" they were actually talking about aiding "violent jihad."

'Militant' gets around in coalfields

BY MAGGIE TROWE

PRICE, Utah—For a third week *Militant* supporters talked to miners and other workers at mine portals, grocery store parking lots, and in working-class neighborhoods in Utah and Colorado.

At the portal of the nonunion Dugout mine near here, miners and coal haulers stopped to check out the *Militant* and talk. A truck driver who works a 72-hour week asked us to stop by her home to sign her up for a subscription. A miner going in to work told us his leg had been badly broken when coal burst out.

A team going door-to-door in Price met an older woman who told us, "My husband was a union miner. Two of my sons have worked in nonunion mines, and one lost his leg. So I know why unions are important."

At a local grocery store, a union pipe line worker from Texas working in Utah said, "I'll do anything to help the cause."

Not everyone held this view. One worker told me, "Every job has occupational hazards. I haven't been working for Murray that long, but I know Murray's mines are safe."

Teams fanned out to mine centers in Colorado and Wyoming. One team traveled to Somerset, Colorado, where three mines are located. Another went to Rangely, Colorado, where the unionized Deserado mine is.

A miner who has worked four months at Deserado after working at the Crandall Canyon mine in Utah said, "This is a safer mine," because of the union.

To date more than 141 subscriptions

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Also Inside:

Day laborers in Virginia fight for right to seek work

BY SETH DELLINGER

HERNDON, Virginia—More than 200 day laborers and their supporters marched to Town Hall here August 3 to oppose plans by local authorities to close down a hiring center or replace its managers. They chanted, "Looking for work is not a crime!"

Among the marchers were day laborers from across the country attending the fourth convention of the National Day Laborer Organizing Network, held August 2–5 in nearby Silver Spring, Maryland. Many had taken part in a press conference at the Capitol in Washington, D.C., where they called for a moratorium on immigration raids until the passage of a new federal immigration law.

In Herndon, anti-immigrant forces have opposed any hiring center for day laborers, while workers have insisted on their right to seek work without harassment. In 2005 the city set up a municipally funded hiring center, "to keep the people from congregating on sidewalks in the 7-Eleven parking lot looking for work," as former mayor Michael O'Reilly recently put it.

On August 16 the Herndon town council voted to replace the center's operator, a religious group called Reston Interfaith, with a new manager who will agree to check workers' immigration status.

Workers who spoke at the Capitol and at the Herndon rally gave several examples of how raids by Immigration and Customs Enforcement (ICE) agents have been used to try to intimidate immigrant workers.

Luis Larín, a day laborer from Baltimore who spoke at the press conference, told the story of how immigration agents, posing as contractors, arrested day laborers in a January sweep. "There were workers of many nationalities there, but they only arrested the Latinos," he said.

Germán Cruz was one of those who was arrested; he spent five months in an immigration jail. "I wasn't looking for work that day, just waiting for the bus," he said. "They came driving up saying '$10 for this,' '$10 for that,' but then we saw they had uniforms. One of them said to me, 'You're illegal, you're coming too.'"

Eugenio Molina, 67, a Salvadoran worker, told the *Militant* he finds work in Wheaton, Maryland, at a street corner one block from El Pollo Rico restaurant, where nine workers were arrested in a July 12 ICE raid.

"Fewer people are coming to look for work now," said Molina, who said he usually worked four days a week before the raid, but now is lucky to get one day's work, gardening.



Militant/Seth Dellinger

Dennis Oriano, of the Day Laborer Congress of New Orleans, speaks at August 2 press conference in Washington, D.C., where workers called for an end to immigration police raids.

Protests in other counties

In neighboring Prince William County, immigrant workers have been organizing protests to get the County Board of Supervisors to rescind a July 10 resolution that deputizes local cops as immigration agents and denies social services to undocumented immigrants. A similar resolution was passed the following week in neighboring Loudon County, and other Virginia counties are also considering anti-immigrant measures. Culpeper County passed a resolution August 8 affirming English as the official language for county government business.

Thousands of workers voted at meetings in late July in the towns of Manassas, Woodbridge, and Dumfries to carry out an economic boycott of businesses in the county not owned by Latinos or other immigrants.

They approved plans for a march and rally in Woodbridge on September 2 and a one-day county-wide work stoppage October 9. Caravans of workers from Prince William County are projected to visit surrounding areas in the coming weeks to build these actions more broadly. For more information, contact Mexicanos sin Fronteras at (703) 369-7427.

N.Y. cops to expand video surveillance system

BY EMILY PAUL

NEW YORK—The police department here is working to install an extensive video surveillance network to monitor thousands of people and cars throughout Lower Manhattan. The system, which is being set up in the name of fighting "terrorism," will include electronic license plate readers, 3,000 cameras, movable roadblocks, and a 24-hour command center staffed by police and private security officers. The first such operation in the United States, officials say it will resemble London's so-called Ring of Steel, the most extensive urban surveillance system in the world.

The $90 million project is scheduled to be installed by 2008 and fully functional by 2010. About 1,000 public and 2,000 private security cameras would be set up below Manhattan's Canal Street, transmitting live information. It would include remote-controlled swinging barriers that cops could use to block traffic and trap a car.

There are already 4,200 surveillance cameras in place below 14th Street, a fivefold increase since 1998, according to the New York Civil Liberties Union.

About 200 cameras have already been placed in working-class neighborhoods labeled "high-crime" areas in New York's five boroughs.

City officials are seeking state approval to charge drivers a fee to enter Manhattan below 86th Street, "which would require the use of license-plate readers," the *New York Times* reported. Although billed as an "anticongestion plan," if it is approved "the police will most likely collect information from those readers too," the paper reported.

Washington, D.C., already has a Joint Operations Command Center in police headquarters that can conduct surveillance through 14 video cameras in several downtown locations. Closed-circuit surveillance systems for the district's public schools and regional subway stations can be watched through the center.

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Signed articles by contributors do not necessarily represent the Militant's views. These are expressed in editorials.

Utah mine layoffs

Continued from front page

were given only a day or two until August 27 to make a decision.

Bailey worked on the rescue operation at the Crandall Canyon mine after six miners were trapped August 6 in a massive collapse deep in the mine.

Many miners and safety officials say a "bounce"—a movement of the mountain caused by intense pressure and the extensive mining of coal—caused the sides of the mine to implode and the floor to heave up more than two feet. The miners were trapped by 2,000 feet of rock and coal.

In June Murray Energy received a permit from the federal Mine Safety and Health Administration (MSHA) to begin "retreat" mining at Crandall Canyon. That procedure is considered among the most dangerous mining methods. Pillars of coal that support the roof are removed as the miners withdraw from the work area, letting the roof cave in.

During the rescue operation, Bailey said, he was operating a scoop to help clear the collapsed entryway to reach the trapped miners when a bounce occurred. The force was so great that his machine was covered with debris.

"It slammed me," Bailey said. "I could not see anything, it was so dusty. I was only able to get out by listening to a voice calling my name."

On August 16 another bounce led to a second collapse, which killed three rescue workers and injured six. The underground rescue operation was halted. Three workers remain hospitalized.

Anger remains among working people in the coal towns of central Utah, as facts have emerged about the mining practices by Murray Energy and after company officials said the men may never be found and may be left entombed in the mine.

The United Mine Workers of America (UMWA) reported August 24 that miners at Crandall Canyon had requested the union represent them in the upcoming MSHA investigation of the disaster.

Families of the trapped miners have secured lawyers to represent them and requested the help of the UMWA, according to local press reports.

Some big-business politicians have called for a congressional inquiry. Utah governor Jon Huntsman announced August 23 that he has set up a Utah Mine Safety Commission that will conduct a separate investigation.

The announcement came a few hours after Huntsman, who has sought to distance himself from Murray, publicly attacked the mine owner for "unconscionable" behavior toward the six trapped workers' families.

Murray responded in a letter to the governor, publicized widely in Utah daily newspapers. Asserting that the governor's remarks were damaging the company's reputation, it read, "If you persist in your statements and course of action, you, Governor, are going to jeopardize 700 jobs in Carbon and Emery Counties. I cannot maintain them alone, and I definitely cannot do it if I am going to be your whipping boy."

A few days later Murray announced the layoffs.

The company claims the layoffs will be temporary, lasting only until mining engineers and experts say the Tower mine is "safe" and can be reopened.

Miners report, however, that dangerous conditions at Tower are not new.

The Tower mine is about 2,800 feet below the mountain's surface, and plans were to go another 400 feet deeper, the *Salt Lake Tribune* reported August 27. According to the Utah Geological Survey, this is "deeper than any [coal-mining] long-wall machine has ever successfully been used in the United States." The deeper the mine, the more potentially dangerous the conditions.

MSHA's records show bounces are a common occurrence at the Tower mine. There have been 10 reported this year, 4 of which caused injuries and 6 which moved heavy machinery or halted production. On May 20 a bounce sent coal flying out of the coal face striking a miner. He received cuts to his head requiring stitches.

In January 2006, Shane Jacobson was killed at the Tower mine while operating a longwall shear to cut coal. A bounce blasted out chunks of coal from the coal face that fatally struck him.

This was the third death at the Tower mine in 10 years.

Out of the 10 operating mines in Utah, 7 are 1,600 to 2,000 feet below the surface, according to the federal Bureau of Land Management. Miners report that unsafe conditions are common in many Utah mines.

On August 23 the Dugout Canyon mine, owned by Arch Coal, was evacuated because of elevated levels of carbon monoxide. MSHA said a fire occurred on the coal face on the longwall mining section.

Matt Madden, 27, was a roof bolter at the nearby Horizon Mine. A few weeks ago he was hit in the chest by a roof bolt and suffered three broken ribs and a split sternum.

"Because the mantrips almost never work, it took three hours for them to get me out of the mine and another hour and a half to get me to the hospital," Madden told the *Militant*. The mantrip is the vehicle that brings workers in and out of the mine.

Madden said he had expressed concerns that the bolts used to hold up the roof were too short. "I reported this to management and was told that MSHA said it was okay to use six-foot roof bolts. I know it's not safe. We've had a lot of roof falls at Horizon," he said.

Madden worked at the Willow Creek Mine in Helper, Utah, when a mine fire in July 2000 killed two people and injured eight others. Along with his crew he went back into the mine and pulled out the survivors and the dead.

"We need the union," Madden said, referring to Horizon and other nonunion facilities. "We miners know how unsafe it is, but the bosses won't listen to us. With the union we can make them listen to us."

Chris Hoeppner and Ved Dookhun contributed to this article.



Militant/Nancy Boyasko

Militant **supporter talks with miner at Deserado mine near Rangely, Colorado, August 27. Utah mine disaster has heightened worker discussions on fight for safety and need for unions.**

'Militant' is part of discussions in coalfields

Continued from front page

and 660 single copies of the *Militant* have been sold in Utah, Colorado, and Wyoming.

BY KEVIN DWIRE

GIRARD, Illinois— "I want that paper for my son to take to work at the Monterey Mine," was the response of one woman here to the *Militant's* coverage of the Utah mine collapse. A team of *Militant* supporters visited central Illinois August 25.

They sold 44 copies of the paper, 8 while going door to door in Girard and 36 at the gate of the nearby Crown II mine. One miner took 5 copies for others in the mine.

Miners reported that Crown II may be closing in the near future.

BY LESLIE DORK AND BETSEY STONE

WINDOW ROCK, Arizona— Supporters of the *Militant* talked with coal miners and other workers on the Navajo Nation in Arizona and New Mexico August 24–26. They sold over 93 copies of the *Militant* and 5 subscriptions.

At the McKinley mine in Tse Bonito and the Peabody mine in Kayenta, more than 70 miners picked up packets of recent issues with coverage on the Utah disaster. Both mines are organized by the United Mine Workers of America.

"They don't have the union up there," said a miner at McKinley, referring to the mine where the disaster occurred.

"Fortunately, we have a strong safety committee," said a surface miner at the Kayenta mine, where miners will be voting on a contract this week.

During door-to-door sales near Window Rock, a former uranium miner said, "When there is no union, the owners get away with anything."

'Militant' teams in Britain reach coal miners

BY CELIA PUGH

LONDON—Sixteen miners and construction contractors bought single copies of the *Militant* at two shift changes August 21 outside the Daw Mill coal mine near Coventry. Daw Mill, with 500 miners, is now the largest underground mine in the United Kingdom.

The miners welcomed the special supplement headed "Safety is a union question! No miner has to die!"

There have been three underground deaths at Daw Mill since June of last year.

In June 2006, Trevor Steeples, 46, died underground after being overcome by methane. Eight weeks later Paul Hunt, 45, was killed under a coal wagon.

A promised inquiry by the government-sponsored Health and Safety Executive (HSE) has not yet made a public report. The company, UK Coal, commissioned an "independent" inquiry into safety practices following the two deaths last year, which concluded that the company was not at fault.

In January 2007 Anthony Garrigan, 42, was crushed by a collapsed tunnel wall which was being repaired because of safety fears. BBC news reported that coal boss Stuart Oliver dismissed any relationship between the 2006 deaths and that of Garrigan.

Garrigan had only been at the pit for one week. He, like many, mined as a contractor, moving from pit to pit on 12-hour shifts with long journeys back home for weekends. The company has also hired between 50 and 70 Polish miners. They are housed and bussed to the pit by an outside agency.

Workers explained that many miners took these contract jobs following the closure of 126 pits after the year-long miners strike in 1984–85. Today there are seven underground coal mines in the United Kingdom.

—MILITANT LABOR FORUMS—

FLORIDA

Miami

Why Hurricane Katrina Is a Social Crisis, Not a 'Natural Disaster.' Fri., Sept. 7. Dinner, 6:30 p.m.; program, 7:30 p.m. Donation: $5 dinner, $5 program. *8365 NE 2nd Ave, Suite 206. Tel.: (305) 756-4436.*

NEW JERSEY

Newark

How Murders of Newark Youth Are Used by New Jersey Government to Target Immigrants and Working Class. Speaker: representative, Socialist Workers Party. Fri., Sept. 7. Program, 8 p.m. *168 Bloomfield Ave., 2nd floor. Tel.: (973) 481-0077.*

—CALENDAR—

NEW YORK

New York

Farmers Speak Out: The Global Struggle for Food Sovereignty. Speakers: Braulio Alvarez, Venezuelan National Assembly and national coordinator of CANEZ, Venezuela's largest peasant group; Juan Tiney Ixbalán, general coordinator of CONIC, Guatemala's National Peasant and Indigenous Coordinating Organization; George Naylor, president of the National Family Farm Coalition in the United States; others. Mon., Sept. 10, 5 p.m. *The New School, Theresa Lang Community and Student Center, 55 West 13th Street, 2nd floor. Tel.: (212) 629-9788.*

Young Socialists get out truth in mining regions

This column is written and edited by members of the Young Socialists, a revolutionary socialist youth organization. For more information contact the YS at 306 W. 37th St., 10th floor, New York, NY 10018; tel.: (212) 629-6649; e-mail: youngsocialists@mac.com.

BY DENICE WADE AND REBECCA WILLIAMSON

HUNTINGTON, Utah—From the first days following the collapse of the Crandall Canyon mine, Young Socialists have been joining teams of *Militant* supporters in solidarity with those affected by the disaster as well as helping get out the truth.

YOUNG SOCIALISTS IN ACTION

We have been meeting workers, young people, and others throughout Utah, Colorado, and Wyoming, discussing the real cause of this disaster—the coal bosses' drive for increased production and profit, cutting corners on safety and putting the lives and limbs of miners in danger.

We heard numerous stories from miners, retired miners, and family members about conditions that miners faced at Crandall Canyon, especially since coal boss Robert Murray took over the operation two years ago. A young miner who had worked for Murray told us that he quit because he was not allowed to have a meter to make checks of gas levels, which at high levels can lead to an explosion.

Young Socialists have also been learning firsthand from retired miners what the conditions were like when more mines were unionized, and how they were safer because of that. The daughter of a retired union miner told us that in her father's job there would always be two other workers there to help and watch your back. Nowadays, she said, they do some jobs alone.

A supporter of the *Militant* from Salt Lake City and a Young Socialist went to Hyrum, Utah, where there is a Swift meatpacking plant that had been raided by *la migra* twice since last December. Many of the meat packers we met identified with conditions mine workers face. Bosses are notorious in meatpacking for routinely skipping safety measures to speed up production.

In these discussions, Young Socialists have been pointing out the need to build strong unions in the mines and in other workplaces, so that the safety and lives of the workers are not in the hands of the bosses. The belief that certain jobs are inevitably dangerous and that some workers will have to die doing them needs to be dispelled. Mining can be done safely and without fatalities when miners can use their union power to put safety and the interests of the workers first.



Militant/Carole Lesnick

Young Socialist Maura DeLuca at New York socialist educational weekend on "The Second American Revolution: Marx and Engels on the Civil War" (see report below).

Young Socialists help host regional education weekend

BY EMILY PAUL

NEW YORK—Young Socialists from the Northeast region attended an educational weekend here August 18–19 entitled "The Second American Revolution: Marx and Engels on the U.S. Civil War." The weekend included a special forum on "A Hidden Chapter of the Civil Rights Movement: The Lowndes County Freedom Party." More than 80 people participated in the weekend, which was put together jointly by the Young Socialists chapter and the Socialist Workers Party in New York.

"Going back and studying history in class terms, reading it from the perspective of Marx and Engels, puts it into the perspective of the line of march of the working class and why the overthrow of slavery was a necessary and significant step for the advancement of our march," said Young Socialist Maura DeLuca, in her class on "The Revolutionary War to Overthrow Slavery."

"This led to the creation of the gravediggers of capitalism—the working class, the class that can lead the next, socialist revolution in the United States, she said."

Dave Prince presented the first class, "Slaveowners' Rebellion and the Constitutional War Against Secession."

Many participants appreciated the Marxist analysis of the Civil War and its meaning for today. "This is new to me. I had never thought about it in class terms," said Tom Marvit, a student at the University of Pittsburgh.

"Instead of a simplistic view, you understand what's behind the war: a class, a movement that has its own purpose," said Camilo Matos, who is active in the Puerto Rican Nationalist Youth.

"It's such a different perspective from what you learn in school," said Casey Logan, a YS member in New York and student at SUNY Albany.

The educational weekend is part of a dynamic summer Marxist educational program, still under way. Some of the readings covered in the syllabus are *The Structure and Organizational Principles of the Socialist Workers Party, The Revolution Betrayed* and *The Transitional Program for Socialist Revolution* by Leon Trotsky, and the two-volume *Revolutionary Continuity* series by Farrell Dobbs. Young Socialists, along with Socialist Workers Party members and others, have been successfully combining this study with political activity.

At Nebraska meeting, meat packers denounce raids

BY JOE SWANSON

OMAHA, Nebraska—About 200 unionists, members of community groups, and immigrant rights activists held a meeting here August 16 to speak out against the abuse and harassment by Immigration and Customs Enforcement (ICE) cops during raids last December. Nearly 1,300 workers at Swift meatpacking plants in six states were arrested in the raids.

United Food and Commercial Workers (UFCW) members and officials from five of the six Swift plants participated in the meeting. The non-union Swift plant in Hyrum, Utah, was the only one not represented.

At the meeting, 15 packinghouse workers spoke about the December 12 raid. "We were treated like we were just a bunch of cattle being held for slaughter," said Ana Arellanes from Cactus, Texas.

"I felt like I was discriminated against because of the color of my skin, as I was repeatedly asked for proof of my citizenship," stated Orlando Núñez, a Chicano maintenance mechanic at the Grand Island, Nebraska, plant. "I think I got the easy part of it, compared to some who were held for many more hours than me, including some of the workers who were called liars."

Missy Broekemeier from the Marshalltown, Iowa, plant, said, "One ICE agent danced around us during the raid and sang, 'It's no fun to be an illegal alien.' Those who were held were treated like criminals."

Sergio Rodríguez, with 25 years at the Greeley, Colorado, plant, said that he "told the ICE agent that I came from Mexico many years ago and had legal documents to live here, but he would not take off the handcuffs so I could show him my identification."

María Cruz from Worthington, Minnesota, said, "I was seven months pregnant at the time of the raid and was held without food, water, or allowed to go to the bathroom for five hours." Alma López, from the same plant, added, "I was forced to change my clothes in front of the male ICE agents and was searched by them despite my request for a female cop in the Swift locker room."

Mike Graves, a Black worker at the Marshalltown plant, said "I was born and raised in Waterloo, Iowa, and the ICE agent asked me multiple times for my identity, while I was held in handcuffs for several hours. My government, through the ICE agents, accused me of trying to run away and treated me like a criminal."

ICE officials reported that of the 1,297 people arrested in those raids, 649 have been deported and 274 charged with identity theft—a criminal charge—and other immigration violations, according to the *Omaha World-Herald*.

UFCW officials said the Omaha meeting was the first such response to the nationwide Swift raids, and another meeting will take place in Chicago. Union spokesperson Ryan Rauzon said their goal is to push for Congressional hearings on the raids and "a citizen review panel to investigate" constitutional violations, as well as to prepare a union lawsuit against the government.

Nothing was said at the meeting about responding to the July 10 raids in which ICE arrested more than 25 people at the six plants, including Braulio Pereyra-Gabino, president of UFCW Local 1149, which represents workers at the Swift plant in Marshalltown and at the Tyson plant in Perry, Iowa. Pereyra-Gabino is charged with "harboring illegal aliens," which carries a five-year maximum prison sentence.

U.S. attorney Lester Paff charged in court papers that "Braulio Pereyra-Gabino's union orientation speech was designed to protect the individual identities of illegal aliens within the worker group," the *Des Moines Register* reported. It said court papers also indicate that an undercover cop recorded a version of that speech on Aug. 22, 2006.

"We are looking forward to Braulio having his day in court," international UFCW spokeswoman Jill Cashen told the *Register*.

About a dozen rightists from the Minuteman Civil Defense Corps protested outside the August 16 union meeting. They verbally baited those who drove into the meeting, and carried U.S. flags and signs reading, "We support ICE, good job for the raids," "We need more raids," "One Nation One Language," and "Illegals have no rights." Most of them remained outside during the entire seven-hour meeting.

At the union meeting, members of a local civil rights group handed out leaflets to publicize a counterprotest to a September 1 rally at the Mexican Consulate in Omaha called by the American Socialist Movement, a fascist group.

ON THE PICKET LINE

Woodworkers strike for job safety in British Columbia

VANCOUVER, British Columbia—More than 6,000 woodworkers have been on strike since July 21 along the coast of British Columbia. The workers, organized by the United Steelworkers (USW), are fighting unsafe working conditions and forced shifts of up to 12 hours. In 2005 alone, 43 forest industry workers were killed.

Eighty-six percent of deaths on the job in 2005 were in nonunion operations, according to the USW. Jack Miller, a logger and union safety representative, told the *Militant* that nonunion operations often give little training to new hires. "Wherever you have a union operation workers have more rights. They can refuse unsafe work," he said.

"A lot of loggers who work for non-union outfits don't have proper safety equipment," said Tony Petula, a logging equipment mechanic. "We need to unionize the nonunion operations."

—Steve Penner

City workers strike in Vancouver

VANCOUVER, British Columbia, August 23—More than 5,000 city workers, members of the Canadian Union of Public Employees (CUPE), have been on strike here for six weeks. They are resisting a concession drive by the city government. The employer has insisted that it "must be able to innovate to provide services in the most cost-effective way," code words for contracting out. In addition they demand that "personal suitability," not seniority, guide their job placement practices.

The workers turned down the city government's final offer by 89 percent on July 19. All city services have been affected, including garbage collection, community centers, permits, and street repairs.

—Dan Grant, striking member of CUPE Local 15

Contract workers strike Kia Motors plant in south Korea

August 27—Contract painting and polishing workers at Kia Motors Corp.'s main plant near Seoul, south Korea, have been on strike since August 23, south Korea's Yonhap News Agency reported. The are demanding higher wages, job security, and equal working conditions with full-time workers. Production has halted at the plant, which accounts for 42 percent of Kia's production.

A week earlier, after staging partial strikes, union workers there won a 5 percent wage increase.

Meanwhile, workers at Kia's parent company, Hyundai Motor, rejected the company's contract offer August 24, signaling a possible strike.

—Paul Pederson

Militant/Mary Ellen Marus

Woodworkers picket July 22 at CIPA Lumber near Vancouver. More than 6,000 are on strike.

Mississippi farmers battle racist gov't lending practices

BY KARL BUTTS

TCHULA, Mississippi—"They're still doing the same thing to the Black farmer," said R.C. Howard, 55, a farmer in this small Delta community. "It's worse now than before the lawsuit."

Howard is one of about 13,000 Black farmers who won a claim against the U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) as part of a 1999 settlement over racist discrimination. But earlier this year the USDA's loan agency notified him they were moving ahead with foreclosure on his land because of outstanding debt.

The lawsuit *Pigford v. Glickman* was brought against the USDA in 1997 for systematic racist discrimination in farm lending. A hard-fought struggle by farmers forced the USDA to admit decades of discrimination.

The settlement brought relief to some Black farmers who filed complaints between 1981 and 1996. But it left the agency's racist county committee system intact. Of 7,882 county committee members nationwide, only 90 are Black. In Mississippi, just 8 of 236 are Black.

In a recent interview at the Mileston Co-Op here, Howard said farmers still have to deal with the same people in the USDA's lending programs who for years have been discriminating against Black farmers.

"With the Black farmer, they watch everything we do like we were children," he said. "I don't know of any Black farmer who put in for a loan and had it come in time [for planting]. That's why it can't be paid back in time.

"That is what the Black farmers' lawsuit was started over," he said.

The most common award in the *Pigford* settlement included $50,000 per farmer. Tax assistance, limited debt forgiveness, and priority consideration for a future loan were also part of the terms. Farmers had to present "substantial evidence" of discrimination, including proof that a similarly situated white farmer was treated more favorably. Of 94,000 claims filed, nearly 9 in 10 were rejected, most for missing deadlines, despite lack of notice.

After winning his claim, Howard notified the local USDA office here that he would take advantage of priority considerations for a loan to buy land. But his application was denied due to a debt—even though it was forgiven under the settlement.

The USDA's current threat to foreclose on his land stems from an outstanding loan to his father, whose 254 acres were transferred to Howard in 1986.

The debt had ballooned since his father received the original loan. Like his cousin David Lee Howard and other farmers around here, the USDA is coming after Howard to collect on loans that include debts they thought had been written off.

This is when the settlement's restricted loan forgiveness hit home for Howard. But he also couldn't understand how written-off debt could come back for collection 10 years later.

When USDA loans secured by land are in default, qualifying farmers must enter into a non-negotiable agreement to avoid foreclosure. These require a lump-sum payment at the end of a 10-year term, which the USDA says is a way to recover "forgiven" debt. The payment is based on the USDA's inflated assessment of land value appreciation.

Farmers across the country have complained that USDA officials told them the agreement will simply expire if they're still farming the land at the end of its term. Because of how these debts are restructured, when the appreciation payment comes due it often creates a financial crisis for the farmer with risk of being driven off the land.

Howard said that after receiving the foreclosure notice, a county USDA committeeman was seen showing Howard's land to a white farmer. Howard has received no apology, despite complaining to the state USDA office.

Meanwhile, two competing bills were introduced in the U.S. Congress June 21 to address the high rate of rejections of *Pigford* claims. One would allow those who didn't receive notice of the deadline to re-file their claims. The other would allow Black farmers to go back to court.

The Black Farmers and Agriculturalists Association and other farm groups will hold a town hall rally in Washington, D.C., August 29 to mark the 10th anniversary of the filing of *Pigford v. Glickman.* "We had them at our mercy and we should have put the fire on them," said Howard of the *Pigford* settlement. "But we had to take the crumbs."

Susan Lamont contributed to this article.

25, 50, AND 75 YEARS AGO

25 CENTS
THE MILITANT
A SOCIALIST NEWSWEEKLY/PUBLISHED IN THE INTERESTS OF THE WORKING PEOPLE

September 10, 1982

Defying government threats and massive displays of police might, tens of thousands of people turned out in cities throughout Poland August 31 for demonstrations of support for the Solidarity union movement.

The turnout—particularly in face of the government's repeated threats to crush the demonstrations with force—showed Solidarity's continued massive support among working people, more than eight months after its activities were outlawed by the imposition of martial law last December.

The demonstrations were called by the Provisional Coordinating Committee (TKK) of Solidarity, which is functioning as a national leadership. In a major strategy document issued at the same time as the demonstration call, the TKK noted the population had to be prepared to carry out a "long term" struggle for its aims: "freedom for the political prisoners and internees, an end to the state of war, and the reactivation of the independent union movement."

THE MILITANT
PUBLISHED IN THE INTERESTS OF THE WORKING PEOPLE
NEW YORK, N.Y. FIVE (5) CENTS

September 9, 1957

Troops of the Arkansas National Guard with clubs, carbines, armored vehicles and jeeps yesterday surrounded Central High School in Little Rock to prevent entry of nine Negro students. Thus did Governor Orval Faubus directly and deliberately flout a federal court order backing the school board's gradual and token integration program. His action amounted to armed insurrection against the federal government.

The response of President Eisenhower, who by law is charged with enforcement of the orders of the federal courts when they are defied, was to back away from the issue and make excuses for the white-supremacists. Queried at his Sept. 3 press conference about Gov. Faubus' use of the National Guard to overrule the federal court, Eisenhower refused to be more definite than saying the Justice Department would "study" the case.

On Sept. 4 the Negro children courageously braved an insulting, threatening mob. Gov. Faubus' troops barred their entry.


THE MILITANT
Weekly Organ of the Communist League of America [Opposition]

September 10, 1932

The past week has marked several aggressive steps of the German bourgeoisie on the foreign front. The pronunciamentos of [German chancellor Kurt] Von Schleicher with regard to the military plans and ambitions of the Junker government have created quite a stir among the world powers.

To be sure, the main aim of the German bourgeoisie remains the same; in the words of Schleicher—first of all to "settle accounts with the internal *Schweinehund*"—that is, with their working class enemy.

The capitalist class of Germany knows full well that to settle accounts with its proletariat it will be dependent upon its basis of mass support: the Nazi movement.

The Hitlerites, for their part, are content to wait. They prefer to hold out in all readiness until the big bourgeoisie sees itself forced to resort to them. And of that they can be quite sure.

The example of Co-Op miners' fight to organize union

The following excerpts of Militant *articles from June 5 and July 3, 2006, recount the lessons and example of the struggle by workers at the Co-Op coal mine in Huntington, Utah, to organize a local of the United Mine Workers of America (UMWA). On Sept. 22, 2003, some 75 miners walked out of C.W. Mining's Co-Op mine, demanding safe working conditions, decent pay, and respect on the job. Over the following two and a half years, they won broad support among miners and other working people. They waged a 10-month strike and defeated a retaliatory lawsuit filed by the bosses. This unionization battle serves as an example for miners in Utah and throughout the United States who think that organizing unions is vital to enforce safety in the mines in face of the bosses' deadly productivity drive.*

The articles refer to the fact that in 2006 a federal court threw out the company's defamation charges and other accusations against the UMWA, 16 miners, and others who had supported or reported on the unionization fight.



Militant/Terri Moss

Co-Op coal miners, other UMWA members, and supporters march up Bear Canyon Road to the mine July 6, 2004, following company offer to let them return after 10-month strike.

BY NORTON SANDLER

SAN FRANCISCO—"We won the battle at the Co-Op mine because of the strength of our fight and the solidarity we received from many unions across this country and internationally, and from working people like those of you here today," said coal miner Bill Estrada.

"Safety issues and working conditions were a big concern of the miners at Co-Op and one of the main reasons we reached out to the United Mine Workers of America for help," Estrada told the crowd [at a Militant Labor Forum]. "We need to unionize the mines. That way we can mobilize union power to protect ourselves, including walking out of the mines when the conditions become too dangerous. With our union safety committees leading the way, mining can be done safely and not a single miner has to die."

Estrada described the fight that 75 coal miners waged at C.W. Mining Company's Co-Op mine.

"The miners, mostly Mexican-born, won every round of this struggle, from the day we walked out to the settlement agreement that has just been achieved," Estrada said.

"We reached out to UMWA locals and other unions for solidarity in Utah and around the country, including a trip by four miners to San Francisco in early 2004 to ask for help from unions here," Estrada explained.

Workers in nearby coal mines were looking at the example set by the Co-Op miners, said Estrada. A group of coal truck drivers contacted the union about getting organized. There were discussions about setting up a picket line outside the area power plants where coal from Co-Op was being used. There were also possibilities to involve rail workers in the struggle in a new way.

"But the miners couldn't carry this struggle by ourselves," Estrada said. "We had limited experience in fighting this kind of battle. We were scrambling to find jobs to make ends meet. We needed more help from the broader union movement than we had been able to win up to that point. As a result, we weren't able to take advantage of the real possibilities then to make advances in union organizing."

"What the Co-Op miners fought through points to why the fight for legalization of the millions of undocumented workers in this country is so important," Estrada noted.

On May 1, federal district court judge Dee Benson issued his ruling on the motions to dismiss the federal lawsuit that had been filed by the remaining defendants in the case. He said the company had not established a valid defamation case against the *Salt Lake Tribune* and the *Deseret Morning News* and dismissed the lawsuit against those papers. In that same ruling Judge Benson also dismissed the entire case against the 16 coal miner defendants, saying, "Laborers are entitled to their opinions. They are entitled to express those opinions, whether in the midst of a labor dispute or not."

When the judge's ruling was combined with the NLRB [National Labor Relations Board] determination that C.W. Mining had fired the miners for union activity, it was clear the unionists had effectively stood off the company in every attempt they made to defeat us, said Estrada.

"We didn't give up a single thing in reaching this agreement. When it came right down to it, only one UMWA supporter, Alyson Kennedy, was going to be eligible to exercise her right to return to work," said Estrada. "This would have been the case even if the votes in favor of the UMWA were counted. But Alyson and the other miners had determined long ago that we didn't want to be part of a UMWA local in name only.

"However, it is very important to note that nothing in this agreement prevents UMWA backers from organizing again at this mine," Estrada said. "If a majority of workers at Co-Op sign cards tomorrow, or six months or a year from now, in favor of being represented by the UMWA, the whole organizing fight can start again."

BY NORTON SANDLER

PRICE, Utah—"The miners on my crew helped me a lot, even though they all spoke Spanish and I couldn't understand most of what they were saying. We did communicate on important things," said [Co-Op coal miner Alyson] Kennedy.

"They would ask me how much I was being paid. I said $7.50 an hour. Most on the crew were being paid less and they had been on the job much longer than me. My co-workers asked me how much I had been paid at other mines. I said $18 to $20 an hour, because there was a *sindicato* (union) at those mines."

Miners gained confidence "every time we stood up to the bosses," she continued [speaking at a union-sponsored event]. "We began talking about how to change these conditions in the spring and summer of 2003. We decided to meet and discuss how to do it. The bosses got wind of it. They would corner miners underground and question us about why we wanted the UMWA to represent us."

"They began suspending miners," she said. "I'll never forget one incident. The crew I was on was waiting in the lamp room to go to work. We noticed that a miner was standing by himself. We asked him what was up because we knew he was supposed to be underground. He told us the shift foreman had taken him out of the mine and the bosses were going to suspend him. Two crews immediately refused to go underground until the company backed down and agreed to put this miner back to work.

"A few days later, on Sept. 22, 2003, the bosses tried this again with another miner, Bill Estrada," she said. "When Bill got to work a boss told him to sign a piece of paper agreeing he would be fired the next time he didn't perform proper safety checks on equipment. Bill told them he wouldn't sign. They then suspended him for three days with intent to discharge and told him to go home. Bill was able to describe to his crew what happened before he left.

"When word of the suspension spread, we decided to leave work, go to the mine office, and let the bosses know we would not return until Bill was back. Miners coming in for the afternoon shift joined us. Over 50 miners were at the office for hours," she said.

"The company then called the county sheriff. Two sheriff's cars showed up and the bosses asked the police officers to get workers off of their property," said Kennedy. "One of the sheriff's deputies looked at the two police cars, and then at the miners, and said, 'Where am I going to put all of them?' The boss responded, 'They are all fired, get them off of the property now.'"

Workers then decided to leave. They turned the lockout into a strike that lasted nearly 10 months, during which they won widespread labor solidarity. "We ended up winning our jobs back, including Bill's," Kennedy said. "This accomplishment was the result of the strength of the fight by the miners and the UMWA."

Possibilities to build union

"The fight to organize the Co-Op mine changed the possibilities for building the union in the region," Kennedy said. "We could see this leading up to and for several months after we won our jobs back in July 2004. Nonunion miners began discussing how to change their job conditions. Some of them would come to our picket line and say they need to fight for a union where they work. They said they made more money than us, but their working conditions were like those we faced at Co-Op."

In face of this situation the bosses pushed their lawsuit to divert the struggle into the courts, she added. "But the miners, the UMWA, and the broader support we got, especially from working people in Carbon and Emery counties, stayed strong and we stood the company off again," said Kennedy. "Now, the lawsuit has been defeated."

Cuban Five appeal

Continued from front page
the basis that the five men could not get a fair trial in Miami. A year later the full 12-judge court overturned that ruling, while allowing for appeal on other points.

Addressing another three-judge panel of the same court, defense attorney Richard Klugh noted that the government never proved their charges of espionage. One key claim was that they sought to infiltrate the U.S. Southern Command headquarters in Miami. But the five never set foot there; the most the prosecution could claim was that they had "staked out" the building.

Another accusation was that they were guilty of counting planes flying into MacDill Air Force Base in Tampa.

Of the 20,000 documents seized from the computers of the five men, not one was classified.

One of the men was convicted for reporting things "that could have been published in the *Miami Herald*," Klugh said.

Gerardo Hernández was convicted of "conspiracy to commit murder." Prosecutors claimed he sent information the Cuban authorities used in 1996 to shoot down planes piloted by the Brothers to the Rescue, a rightist outfit in Miami with a record of violent attacks. The hostile planes had violated Cuban airspace and been warned to turn back. The defense pointed out that no evidence was presented in the trial showing that Hernández had knowledge of Cuba's plans for the shootdown.

Defense attorney Brenda Bryn said prosecution misconduct at the trial violated court rules and demanded that the five be granted a new trial. She noted that 28 of 34 objections lodged against prosecutors during closing arguments were sustained. "I find that number troubling," Judge Phyllis Kravitch told U.S. attorney Carolyn Miller.

As an example of improper efforts to prejudice the outcome of the trial, Bryn noted that in its closing arguments the government insisted that the five Cubans were "bent on the destruction of the United States, paid for by the American taxpayer."

At a reception the previous day attended by more than 70 supporters of the campaign to free the five, one of the lawyers for the five, Leonard Weinglass, commented on the severity of the sentences. He said three of the five Cubans received the same life sentence as Robert Hansen, Aldrich Ames, and Robert Walker. The latter three worked for the FBI, CIA, and Navy, respectively and were convicted of turning over hundreds of pages of classified documents to a foreign government. In the case of the Cuban Five "there is not one piece of classified paper," Weinglass said.

Attorneys said it could be months before there is a ruling by the appeals court.

Supporters of the international campaign to free the Cuban Five are planning a month-long series of public events starting September 12, the ninth anniversary of their arrest. For more information contact the National Committee to Free the Cuban Five (www.freethefive.org) or local distributors of the *Militant* (see page 8 directory).

5,000 attend Quebec Social Forum



Militant/Beverly Bernardo

MONTREAL—More than 5,000 people attended the August 23–26 Quebec Social Forum here. Participants, in their majority from Quebec, included young people, trade unionists, political activists, and others. The political gathering was patterned after the World Social Forum initiated in 2001 in Porto Alegre, Brazil.

Joe Young (above, facing camera) and Annette Kouri, the Communist League candidates in the October 10 Ontario provincial elections, joined the wide-ranging discussions there. More than 500 copies of their campaign flyer were distributed.

Socialists from Toronto, Montreal, and the United States participated. They sold 39 subscriptions to the *Militant* and more than 200 copies of the paper, as well as dozens of books on revolutionary politics and copies of the French-language Marxist magazine *Nouvelle Internationale*.

—Beverly Bernardo

Washington presses Pakistan gov't to cooperate in 'war on terror'

BY RÓGER CALERO

Pakistan's president, Gen. Pervez Musharraf, acknowledged publicly August 12 that Taliban forces are using Pakistan's border region as a base from which to launch attacks against U.S. and NATO troops occupying Afghanistan.

"There is support from these areas to Taliban activity inside Afghanistan," said Musharraf in a joint appearance with Afghan president Hamid Karzai at the closing session of a four-day gathering in Kabul, the capital of Afghanistan, where 600 tribal leaders from both sides of the border participated. "There is no doubt Afghan militants are supported from Pakistani soil," he said.

Until July, Pakistani officials were still denying U.S. claims that al-Qaeda and Taliban forces were operating from Pakistan. The government in Islamabad, under pressure from Washington, abandoned its support for the Taliban in 2001 to become a U.S. ally. But it has held back from blocking Taliban activity in its territory. In Pakistan "sections of the military regard the predominantly Pashtun fighters [of the Taliban] as a useful means of retaining influence," the *Financial Times* noted August 8.

The U.S.-backed conference was billed by the big-business media as a step toward improving relations between two of Washington's key allies in the so-called war on terror. They also sought to use it to undermine support for Taliban and al-Qaeda among local tribal groups.

Washington and its imperialist allies are pressing the Pakistani government to show results on its pledge to combat "terrorism." Since July, Islamabad has deployed tens of thousands of troops to Waziristan, on the northwestern border with Afghanistan, and has launched attacks that have killed dozens of Taliban fighters.

While stressing its preference of collaborating with the Musharraf government, the White House has left open the prerogative of taking further military action unilaterally. U.S. president George Bush said at an August 9 news conference that he expected Musharraf's "full cooperation in sharing intelligence" on suspected al-Qaeda and Taliban activities and "swift action taken if there is actionable intelligence on high-value targets."

Democratic presidential candidate Barack Obama went further, saying on August 8, "If we have actionable intelligence about high-value terrorist targets and president Musharraf won't act, we will."

"We can't send millions and millions of dollars to Pakistan for military aid and be a constant ally to them and yet not see more aggressive action in dealing with al-Qaeda," Obama said a week later.

Washington's demands that Musharraf crack down on al-Qaeda and the Taliban have sharpened the political crisis facing the military leader.

Faced with strong opposition from inside and outside of government, including from Washington, Islamabad backed away August 9 from imposing a state of emergency that "would have given Musharraf sweeping powers to restrict freedom of movement and assembly, and could have extended for another year the term of the current parliament, which is viewed as pro-Musharraf," the *Washington Post* reported.

"We are against the imposition of emergency. If Musharraf does so, we will oppose it, and let me make it clear that there is no justification for it," said Syed Kabir Ali Wasti of the ruling Pakistan Muslim League-Q party, according to the *Post*. He said Musharraf was only interested in "protecting his own interests."

In face of reports that Musharraf was considering the imposition of a state of emergency U.S. secretary of state Condoleezza Rice made a quick phone call to the Pakistani leader August 9.

"President Musharraf and the Pakistani government have… demonstrated that they want to cooperate within its laws and Pakistan's constitution," said U.S. State Department spokesman Sean McCormack at a news briefing later that day.

Nicaragua farm workers protest pesticide exposure

BY RÓGER CALERO

MANAGUA, Nicaragua, August 7—Hundreds of banana workers remained camped in front of the National Assembly building here to press their demand for compensation and medical care for more than 26,000 agricultural workers suffering from illnesses linked to toxic pesticide exposure.

The farm workers and their supporters had marched 86 miles to this capital from Chinandega, the center of Nicaragua's banana-growing region. It was their fifth such march since their fight began in 1999.

"We want financial compensation from the banana companies. We want the government to recognize our rights and previous agreements," said Santos Rivera, 49, a former banana worker from El Sauce. "This is a cause for all workers."

Since late 1990s, banana workers in Nicaragua have waged a struggle, including legal action, demanding compensation from U.S. companies for distributing and using the pesticide Nemagon for decades. They say the companies did so with knowledge of its harmful health effects and environmental dangers, even after the U.S. Environmental Protective Agency banned its use in 1979.

Dibromochloropropane (DBCP), the active ingredient in Nemagon, is known to cause sterility and it is suspected in increased rates of cancer, depression, vision loss, and kidney, liver, and stomach problems. In addition to direct exposure to the pesticide, Nemagon and other pesticides have been found in drinking water supplies.

Nearly $17 billion is claimed in reparations against the food corporations that used DBCP: Dole Food Company, Chiquita Brands, and Del Monte, and against companies that manufacture the chemical: Shell Oil, Occidental Chemical, and Dow Chemical.

Other countries where the chemical has been used are Guatemala, Ecuador, Venezuela, Costa Rica, Honduras, and the Philippines.

Victorino Espinales, a leader of Asotraexdan (Association of Workers and Former Workers Affected by Nemagon and Fumazone), one of the leading organizations involved in the fight, said they were demanding that health-care funding for affected workers, won in 2005, be maintained. He said the Nicaraguan government has eliminated these benefits. They are also demanding lifetime pension benefits for those suffering from illnesses linked to DBCP poisoning.

The 1956 'baptism of fire' of Cuba's Rebel Army

Printed below is an excerpt from Episodes of the Cuban Revolutionary War, 1956–58, *by Ernesto Che Guevara. It is one of Pathfinder's Books of the Month for September. Guevara tells how a group of 82 revolutionaries led by Fidel Castro, leaving from Mexico on the* Granma *yacht, arrived on the southeastern coast of Cuba Dec. 2, 1956, to launch a revolutionary war against the Fulgencio Batista dictatorship. Following a surprise assault three days later, described in the excerpt below, the combatants were scattered. Twenty-one were killed, 21 were captured, 20 escaped, and 20 regrouped and continued to fight. Copyright © 1996 by Pathfinder Press, reprinted by permission.*

BOOKS OF THE MONTH

BY ERNESTO CHE GUEVARA

Alegría de Pío is a place in Oriente province, Niquero municipality, near Cabo Cruz. There, on December 5, 1956, the dictatorship's forces took us by surprise.

We were exhausted from a trek not long so much as painful. We had landed on December 2, at a place known as Las Coloradas beach. We had lost almost all our equipment, and with new boots we had trudged for endless hours through saltwater marshes. As a result, almost the entire troop was suffering from open blisters on their feet. But boots and fungus infections were not our only enemies. We had reached Cuba following a seven-day voyage across the Gulf of Mexico and the Caribbean Sea, without food, in a boat in poor condition, with almost everyone plagued by seasickness. . . .



Council of State Office of Historical Affairs

Rebel Army combatants in May 1957. From left: Guillermo García, Ernesto Che Guevara, Universo Sánchez, Raúl Castro, Fidel Castro, Crescencio Pérez, Jorge Sotús, Juan Almeida.

By daybreak on December 5 hardly anyone could go a step further. On the verge of collapse, the men would walk a short distance and then beg for a long rest. Because of this, orders were given to halt at the edge of a cane field, in a thicket close to the dense woods. Most of us slept through the morning hours.

At noon we began to notice unusual signs of activity. Piper planes as well as other types of small army planes together with private aircraft began to circle overhead. Some of our group went on peacefully cutting and eating sugarcane without realizing they were perfectly visible from the enemy planes, which were circling slowly at low altitudes. I was the troop physician at the time, and it was my duty to treat the blistered feet. I recall my last patient that morning: his name was Humberto Lamothe and it was to be his last day on earth. I still remember how tired and worn-out he looked as he walked from my improvised first-aid station to his post, still carrying in his hand the shoes he could not wear.

Comrade Montané and I were leaning against a tree talking about our respective children, eating our meager rations—half a sausage and two crackers—when we heard a shot. Within seconds, a hail of bullets—at least that's the way it seemed to our sagging spirits during that baptism of fire—descended upon our eighty-two-man troop. My rifle was not one of the best; I had deliberately asked for it because I was in very poor physical condition due to an attack of asthma that had bothered me throughout our ocean voyage, and I did not want to be responsible for wasting a good weapon. I can hardly remember the sequence of events. I recall that [Juan] Almeida, then a captain, came beside me to get orders, but there was nobody there to issue them. Later I learned that Fidel had tried vainly to get everybody together into the adjoining cane field, which could be reached by simply crossing a path. The surprise had been too great and the gunfire had been too heavy. Almeida went back to take charge of his group. At that moment a comrade dropped a box of ammunition almost at my feet. I pointed to it, and he answered me with an anguished expression, which I remember perfectly, that seemed to say "It's too late for ammunition boxes," and immediately went toward the cane field. (He was murdered by Batista's henchmen some time later.)

Perhaps this was the first time I was faced in real life with the dilemma of choosing between my devotion to medicine and my duty as a revolutionary soldier. There, at my feet, were a knapsack full of medicine and a box of ammunition. I couldn't possibly carry them both; they were too heavy. I picked up the box of ammunition, leaving the medicine, and started to cross the clearing, heading for the cane field. I clearly remember Faustino Pérez, kneeling and firing his submachine gun. Near me, a comrade named Albentosa was walking toward the cane field. A burst of gunfire hit us both. I felt a sharp blow to my chest and wound in my neck, and I thought for certain I was dead. Albentosa, spewing blood from his nose and mouth and from a deep wound made by a .45-caliber bullet, shouted something like, "They've killed me!" and began to wildly fire his rifle. . . .

Someone on his knees shouted that we had better surrender, and I heard a voice—later I found out it was Camilo Cienfuegos—shouting: "Nobody surrenders here!" followed by a four-letter word. . . . For a moment I was left alone, just lying there waiting to die. Almeida approached, urging me on, and despite the intense pain I dragged myself into the cane field. There next to a tree I saw Comrade Raúl Suárez, whose thumb had been blown away by a bullet, being attended by Faustino Pérez, who was bandaging his hand. Then everything became a blur, as low-flying planes strafed the field. . . .

With Almeida leading the way, we crossed the last path among the rows of cane and reached the safety of the woods. . . .

This was our baptism of fire on December 5, 1956, on the outskirts of Niquero. Such was the beginning of forging what would become the Rebel Army.

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EDITORIAL

Stop the raids and deportations!

The needed response to stepped-up sweeps of workplaces and neighborhoods by immigration cops is to organize broad public actions demanding: Unconditional legalization of all immigrants now! Stop the raids and deportations!

To counter bosses' efforts to use the raids to intimidate and divide workers, the labor movement must unequivocally oppose all raids, deportations, and other anti-immigrant attacks. Working people need to organize unions and use union power in defense of the undocumented to effectively fight the employers' assault on the job conditions, living standards, and rights of all workers.

These anti-working-class attacks range from factory raids like the December 12 and July 10 police sweeps at Swift meatpacking plants, to ordinances in numerous towns that seek to criminalize undocumented workers by barring them from local employment, housing, or services. Also arrayed against working people are rightist groups like the Minutemen and the fascist-minded American Socialist Movement, which have been targeting foreign-born workers in the Midwest and elsewhere.

Many workers have not been intimidated, however. Their mood has been captured in the slogan "We are workers, not criminals!" Day laborers in Virginia and other areas have rallied and held conferences to demand the right to seek work without cop harassment. Protests took place in several cities after *la migra* recently arrested and deported Elvira Arellano, a former Chicago airport worker who, taking refuge in a church over the past year, became an outspoken symbol of resistance by immigrant workers.

These struggles are a sign of immigrant workers gaining self-confidence as they become more integrated into the U.S. working class by the millions. As that process unfolds it strengthens the working class as a whole.

An indicator of these changes is the widespread solidarity among working people today with six coal miners trapped in a Utah mine collapse, which include both Mexican- and U.S.-born miners. Immigrant workers are part of the discussions today among miners in that region on how to fight unsafe job conditions and on the need to organize unions.

The ruling U.S. capitalists remain divided over immigration policy, as seen in their failure to pass an "immigration reform" law. All existing proposals by Democrats and Republicans are reactionary measures serving the bosses and should be rejected.

Building the upcoming immigrant rights actions in September and October provides an opportunity to involve more working people in the battle for full, unconditional legal status for all immigrants and an immediate halt to all deportations and *migra* raids.

Western Sahara independence supporter speaks at New Zealand, Australia meetings

BY ANNALUCIA VERMUNT

AUCKLAND, New Zealand—"We cannot accept the occupation" of Western Sahara by Morocco, Malainin Lakhal told a public meeting of 40 people here July 23. Lakhal, secretary general of the Union of Saharawi Writers and Journalists, described the long fight for independence waged by the Saharawis, during a six-city speaking tour of Australia and New Zealand in June and July.

Participants in the July 23 meeting heard how the Moroccan rulers benefit from exporting phosphate mined in Western Sahara to countries like New Zealand.

At Auckland University the previous day, Lakhal told students that the Western Sahara independence fight dates back to the struggle across West Africa against Spanish colonial domination. When Madrid was forced to withdraw in the 1970s, Western Sahara was divided between Morocco and Mauritania.

The pro-independence Polisario Front "fought a war against both invaders from 1976 to 1991, forcing Mauritania to withdraw from our territory," said Lakhal. Morocco's army, meanwhile, expanded its occupation and paved the way for large-scale settlement of the area. Many Saharawis were forced to flee the fighting. Today about 170,000 live in camps in southwest Algeria.

In the face of effective resistance led by Polisario Front fighters, said Lakhal, "by 1991 Morocco was willing to negotiate. But they have broken every agreement made since then."

In 1999, "thousands of Saharawis in all the cities of the occupied zone of Western Sahara and in the southern cities of Morocco joined the protest. For four months people got to the streets, chanting slogans in favor of the independence of their country. Hundreds [of] demonstrators were arrested, tortured, imprisoned, or abused," said Lakhal at a press conference in Sydney, Australia.

Lakhal explained how the Moroccan occupation is backed by the governments of the United States, France, and Spain. "The United States endorsed the autonomy plan Morocco put forward last month," he said. The plan "provides no recognition to Western Sahara as a sovereign state. The United States also controls the World Food Program, and two years ago they reduced the number of refugees they would support in the camps from 160,000 to 90,000 as part of its campaign to put pressure on the Polisario Front."

In spite of such barriers, Lakhal said the struggle is very much alive today. "Every day inside the occupied zones there are political actions in support of Western Sahara."

L.A. marchers: 'No raids, deportations!'

Continued from front page

son)—to fight for the legal return of Arellano and an end to family separations.

There were articles leading up to the action in *La Opinión* and *Hoy*, the two Spanish-language dailies here. Radio announcer Eddie Sotelo, known by his on-air personality El Piolín, announced his support.

The protest began with a short rally. Maria Elena Durazo, executive secretary-treasurer of the Los Angeles County Federation of Labor, urged marchers to fight for legalization and for comprehensive immigration reform.

The march was marshaled by members of Service Employees International Union Local 1877.

"This march is a recognition that working people place this struggle at the center," said José Sandoval, coordinator of the Voluntarios de la Comunidad in San Jose, California. They brought a vanload of marchers.

"It's better if we have hundreds of thousands," Sandoval said, "but if we have hundreds that's okay because we have to fight for this."

In San Diego, more than 100 protesters gathered August 23 to demand Arellano be allowed to return to the United States.

Rick Trujillo and Sylvia Hansen in San Diego contributed to this article

Forum in Chicago protests cop brutality



Militant/Jorge Lertora

Ashunda Harris, whose nephew Aaron Harrison was killed by Chicago cops, speaks at August 24 Militant Labor Forum.

BY ROLLANDE GIRARD AND DENNIS RICHTER

CHICAGO, Illinois—"Let's be so loud in Chicago that our voices reach across the nation," said Ashunda Harris to an August 24 Militant Labor Forum here to protest police brutality and demand justice for Aaron Harrison, her nephew.

"We've got to make noise. If not, nothing is going to happen," she said.

The majority of the 50 participants at the forum were from the West Side neighborhood of North Lawndale, a Black community.

Aaron Harrison, an 18-year-old African American, was chased by the police into an alley in North Lawndale where he was shot in the back August 6. The police claimed that he was pointing a gun at them, but witnesses said he was unarmed. Harrison was then handcuffed and died before the ambulance arrived.

"We need Mayor [Richard] Daley to be held accountable," said Harris. "Cook County is in a state of disaster, because they've got the police killing our people."

"Since my brother was killed, four more were killed and one shot," said Laverne Teague, whose brother Lester Spruill died in custody in July. "All families have to come forward. They're stealing the life of our youth."

Spruill, 43, was arrested July 19. His family was notified two days later that he had died in custody. A month later the police still have not released a report on the cause of the death. His sister said that when they got the body it was covered with bruises.

On August 4, Gefery Johnson, 42, died on Chicago's South Side when the police repeatedly shocked him with Taser guns and pepper sprayed him.

The panel also included Rev. Rick Harris, a community leader in North Lawndale. "Don't tolerate being beaten, harassed," he said. "It's a disgrace, we need to stand up and come up together. Police brutality has to be addressed across the nation." He invited the crowd to a September 12 town hall meeting in North Lawndale.

Another speaker, Alonzo, said his friend Eric Tonson, 17, was shot in the face by police the day before. "Let's get them indicted, and convicted," he said. "Every Tuesday and Thursday cops do a sweep and charge us. They have a quota, so we all have criminal backgrounds."

Dennis Richter, representing the Socialist Workers Party, pointed out that the Chicago police have shot 23 people so far this year. The cops are trained to intimidate, to degrade people," he said. "The only way to get any justice is to fight."

Mary Johnson, a long-time activist against police brutality and a leader of the Families of the Wrongfully Convicted also spoke. In 2004 "May Molina, a Latina, one of the founders of our group, also died in custody," she said. "You're coming together. Keep organizing, we need numbers."

A collection at the forum for the Aaron Harrison Memorial Fund raised $73. After the meeting, Annie Johnson, Harrison's mother, said she was "thankful for all the support."

"If you don't fight, you are not alive," she said.

CORRECTION

A photo box in the September 3 *Militant* (issue 31) about protests in Chicago against the police killing of Aaron Harrison gave the wrong last name for his aunt, who appears in the photo. Her name is Ashunda Harris.